



PAUL CUNNINGHAM

WARD 2

August 12, 2016

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PAUL'S NOTE

The rain this past Tuesday was much needed, but at the same time it wreaked havoc on many places in town. Some areas received a record 3 inches of rain. The Tucson Fire Department responded to over 75 weather related incidents.

I am old enough to remember the floods of 1983, when seven inches of rain fell in the course of a few days. The floods paralyzed parts of the city for days and thirteen Southern Arizonans lost their lives.

Because of that flood, there are a lot of things we do differently now. At the mayor and council meeting on Tuesday, we moved forward with some new standards to bring us more into line with FEMA and National Flood Insurance Program guidelines. Councilmember Kozachik and I both brought up the

possibility of a storm water management district.

The weather this summer has been a study in contrasts: record breaking heat broken up by severe storms. It's not an unusual pattern for those of us that have lived here for a long time, but the extreme heat (15 days over 110 degrees in July) and the above normal flooding is new.

Our climate is changing, and it is caused by human activity. Six billion people on the planet is going to have an impact. In fact, our region is experiencing some of the most pronounced changes in the lower 48 states. Between 1976 and 2005 we had an increase of average annual temperature of 2.5 degrees. This is more than twice the global average for the same period of time. The desert southwest is expected to experience a further increase in tem-

perature of 5 to 8 degrees by the end of the century given no reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. These shifts are expected to be greater in the summer than the winter.

In regards to flooding, one consideration is how our urban areas are built. In Tucson, the decision was made generations ago that our streets would be the best way to move storm water quickly to the network of washes, gullies and arroyos that connect our neighborhoods. It saved money at the time, but it has also meant that our roads turn into virtual rivers during monsoon season.

This exacerbates a problem that most cities have already. To accommodate our cars with wider roads or parking lots we lay down miles of asphalt. An estimate I've seen is that a quarter of

PAUL'S NOTE, CONTINUED

our city's land area is covered by asphalt. That asphalt along with roofs, sidewalks and other impervious material are designed not to absorb water. This means that water will be on the move rather than being absorbed into the ground. This makes flood situations worse.

Remember that the difference between a flooded arroyo and one going over its banks into a neighborhood is not much. There are simple measures that we can take as citizens and property owners. This is one reason I've been beating the drum on rainwater harvesting for so long.

Brad Lancaster is our local rainwater guru. According to him, we could do all landscape watering in Tucson with rainwater. That would reduce water consumption by 30 to 50 percent. That would go a long way to building our water security while reducing flooding.

As an example, I'll point to grounds at the Ward 2 office here on East Speedway. The cistern is easy to see from the street. It collects 10,000 gallons of water from the rooftop that otherwise would have made its way onto Speedway. It is used to irrigate the landscape around our office.

Cisterns and irrigation systems are the things that come to mind when we talk about rainwater harvesting. That's called active rainwater harvesting, but there is also passive rainwater harvesting. This is when the landscape is designed and contoured to send rainwater where you want it, places like tree wells and waterbeds, and keep it away from where you don't, like doorways and streets.

Parking lots are big sources of flood problems. Our parking lot here is relatively small, a bit shy of six tenths of an acre. That is six tenths of an acre that isn't absorbing water. All that water used to flow downhill onto a driveway used by the fire department, and in turn, would flow on to Speedway along with other storm water causing hazards for drivers and tearing up the asphalt.

When the cistern and new irrigation system was installed, the plan called for trees and a reshaping of the grounds in the median between the parking lot and the driveway. This means that instead of all of that water becoming a hazard, it now channeled and absorbed into the ground. This isn't just a matter of aesthetics: this helps our water table and it contributes to our city's overall shade canopy, which helps us in a number of ways, including energy conservation and reducing our heat island effect.

This isn't gee-whiz technology either; it's dirt, rocks and plants. The people who have lived out here in past centuries knew how to do this, and many of our own ancestors did too. There is a lot that we as a city can do to encourage more of it.

The city has a program to promote rainwater harvesting, and unfortunately I don't think that enough people use it. You can apply for a rebate for up to \$2000 for an active or passive system. For more information, you can go to <https://www.tucsonaz.gov/water/rwh-rebate>.

By the way, for you weather mavens out there, you can check rainlog.org for rainfall figures in your area. They have many people that report rainfall to them, so you'll probably even see something from your own neighborhood.

WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY CELEBRATION

The Pima County/Tucson Women's Commission, an official local government agency, will be holding a fundraising event in August. (While it has members appointed by and reports to both the City and the County, the Commission receives no funding from either.) The event will celebrate both the annual Women's Equality Day and the 40th anniversary of the Women's Commission. It will be a luncheon held at the Lodge on the Desert, 306 N. Alvernon Way, on Thursday, August 25th from 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM. The theme of the day is "Equality: the Journey Continues. " Master of Ceremonies for the luncheon will be KVOA news anchor Kristi Tedesco, and featured speakers will be Kristen Mayes, former chair of the Arizona Corporation Commission; Judy Rich, CEO of Tucson Medical Center, and Joe Broschak, professor of entrepreneurship at UA's Eller College of Management. The keynote speaker will be Carolyn Warner, three-time Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction and former gubernatorial candidate. Topics for their talks may be found on our website, pimatucsonwomen.org.

Reservations for the luncheon may be made by mail, at \$65 per seat (\$40 is tax deductible), by sending a check made out to the Pima County/Tucson Women's Commission, to P.O. Box 50684, Tucson, AZ 85703. Please indicate your choice of main course: chicken, or vegetarian mushroom ravioli. Reservations may also be made at the Commission's website: pimatucsonwomen.org. Seating is limited, and reservations must be received by Tuesday, August 16th

SANDBAGS

The City of Tucson is now offering a self-service site for sandbags in the parking lot of Hi Corbett Field on South Randolph Way. The Tucson Department of Transportation (TDOT) has a big pile of sand in the lot, complete with shovels and sandbags to fill on your own. Please adhere to the 10-bag limit so there's enough to go around for those who need them. If you don't want to fill your own sandbags, pre-filled bags are available at Tucson Fire Department Station 7, 4902 E. Pima St., but you need to load the bags into your vehicle on your own. Bags will be replenished as needed until the end of the monsoon. City staff will not be available to help. The same 10-bag limit applies at that site as well. It is very important that motorists not block driveway access to the fire station.

CAROL WEST SENIOR CENTER

Health and Wellness Fair: The Health and Wellness Fair will be on Thursday, September 29 from 11 am to 1 pm. There will be vendors, presentations, raffle, prizes and more.

Casino Night: Casino Night will be on Thursday, August 25 from 5 pm to 7:30 pm. The cost is \$8.00 per person. The event will include entertainment, food, gambling chips, great prizes from local businesses, and fun! The event is sponsored by The Forum of Tucson, and FiveStar Senior Living.

Aquatic Fitness: A free aquatic fitness class will be on Tuesday, August 30 from 8 am to 10:30 am. It will include a safety talk and snacks. Sponsored by CareMore.

Udall Center Closure: The Udall Center will be closed for annual maintenance beginning August 8 through 12. The center will re-open Monday, August 15.

Please contact the Carol West Senior Addition, 791-4121 for questions.

PARKS PROGRAMS

Summer Swim: Pools open for Summer through August 4. Fall (year-round) swim schedule will be on August 4. For more City pool information call 791-4245 or 791-5352.

Fall Program Guide and Parks and Recreation Leisure Classes: The Tucson Parks and Recreation Fall Program Guide has been published, and registrations have started. The Fall Leisure classes for Session I takes place from August 28-October 15. Session II of classes will run October 23-December 10. For class and program availability, call Registration Services at 791-4877. Visit www.ezeereg.com for additional information.

City Softball: The City Softball League season begins August 15. Walk-in registrations are currently taking place at the Sports Unit located at 8155 E Poinciana Drive. Registration ends August 5.

Closures: Udall Center will be closed for annual maintenance beginning August 8 through 13. The Sabino Canyon Road extension project work will require western entrance to be Udall Park to be closed for 2-3 weeks.

Call 791-4877 for more information or questions.

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Remember to like
Paul on Facebook!

Please bring these items to the Ward 2 Office
for the following charities:

**THE COMMUNITY FOOD BANK—Non Perishable
Items**

**DIAPER BANK OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA—
Infant/Child/Adult Diapers**

**TIHAN - Personal Care Items for Individuals
and Families in Need**

LIONS CLUB—Eye Glasses

**DANCING IN THE STREETS ARIZONA—Ballet/
Dance Equipment**

CASA MARIA—Plastic bags

MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Due to the Labor Day holiday, the next Mayor and Council meeting will be on **Wednesday, September 7**. Regular Session starts at 5:30 pm following an afternoon study session. There is always a short call to the audience before the business portion of the meeting. Council chambers are located downtown at 255 W Alameda.

The agendas for the meetings are posted online at <http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/clerks/mcdocs>

